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UNCLAS HO CHI MINH CITY 001159

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DEPT FOR CA/OCS/ACS/EAP, EAP/BCLTV

BANGKOK FOR LEGAT

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: GVN Denies Detention/Mistreatment of Amcits

REF: A) HCMC 1108; B) HCMC 1032; C) HCMC 1057;
D) HCMC 1100; E) HCMC 1048; F) State 176619

1. The MFA's HCMC External Relations Office (ERO) has formally replied to the note delivered by post on August 17 protesting the detention and mistreatment of several American citizens (ref A). The text of the reply is provided below.

2. Quote:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
The Office of External Relations in Ho Chi Minh City
No.: 3553/NV/LS

The Office of External Relations in Ho Chi Minh City presents its compliments to the Consulate General of the United States in Ho Chi Minh City and would like to respond to the Consulate General's diplomatic note No. 254/04 as follows:

As the Office of External Relations explained to the Consulate General of the United States in diplomatic notes no. 3205/NV/LS, dated 12 August 2004, and no. 3241/NV/LS, dated 16 August 2004, regarding the case of Hoang The Lan, the Security Investigation Office of the Ministry of Public Security received a letter denouncing a number of U.S. passport holders as members of the terrorist organization "National United Front For the Liberation of Vietnam," led by Hoang Co Dinh and Nguyen Kim in the United States, who had entered Vietnam to carry out terrorist and destructive activities.

In order to clarify this denunciatory letter, the police invited these people to the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Public Security for discussion (not for arrest or temporary detention). They admitted that they were members of the above organization, but denied entering Vietnam to carry out terrorist activities.

The Security Investigation Office of the Ministry of Public Security has investigated and confirmed that there have been no cases of U.S. passport holders being arrested, beaten or mistreated as stated in the U.S. Consulate General's diplomatic note no. 254/04. These allegations are fabricated and slanderously false.

The Office of External Relations in Ho Chi Minh City avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Consulate General of the United States in Ho Chi Minh City the assurances of its highest consideration.

Ho Chi Minh City, September 3, 2004

End quote.

Winnick